K. Robinson (John)

THE Clergy's Tears:

OR, A

CRY

AGAINST

PERSECUTION.

Humbly offer'd in a

LETTER

TO THE

Lord Bishop of *London*,

IN OUR

Present GREAT DISTRESS and DANGER.

This is a Sad Subject! to look upon the Nakedness and Reproach of so many who were once Members of that Renowned Church *of* England! *Answer to Dr.* King's *State of the Protestants*, Pag. 124.

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MY LORD,

AS *Subſtitutes* to Your Lordſhip, upon whom the Care and Government of the Church and Clergy, by Divine Permiſſion, is *devolved*, we cannot more properly, nor, we hope more effectually, apply ourſelves IN OUR UNSPEAKABLE AFFLICTION, than to Your Lordſhip, with whom GOD has entruſted the Patrociny, and, in all lawful Things, as far as You are able, the Guidance and the Protection of us.

See the Letter from the Biſhop to his Clergy.

'Tis to You, therefore, my Lord, in Right, we are Bold, *for Grief has forc'd our Utterance!* to tell our DEPLORABLE Condition; our preſent Sufferings for *Righteouſneſs*, and for the *Truth's ſake*; our *Illegal and Unwarrantable* PERSECUTIONS; and how we are mark'd out for Deſtruction, unleſs ſome Mighty Power and Miracle from GOD ſhould interpoſe to reſcue and deliver us from that CRUEL FORCE that is *Strengthening* itſelf againſt us.

And that which we crave from Your Lordſhip is, and 'tis in the Name of GOD we do require it at Your Hands; it is, that Your Lordſhip will with the Fortitude and Courage of a TRUE Chriſtian Biſhop, lead us through the rough Path; that You will ſtand Unſhaken at the Head of us, whilſt we are Defending the *Cauſe of Chriſt* and of the Goſpel, againſt the fatal Oppoſition, that is made by a GENERATION OF VIPERS, and the vileſt Sett of Men that ever the Sun ſhin'd upon, againſt them; that You will, by Your Exhortations, and by Your Own Example, even to the laying down of Your Sacred Life, if the Cauſe of GOD and of the Church ſhould require it, lead us the way, which the Goſpel of JESUS CHRIST tells us we muſt go, or elſe we *are not worthy of Him.*

This will be the greateſt Comfort to us, in the midſt of our Struggle with a perverſe Generation; it will extremely fortify us in our ſincere Purpoſes to undergo whatever the Providence of GOD has determin'd to permit our implacable Enemies to inflict upon us, becauſe of our late grievous Apoſtacies, and Backſlidings from Him, and the Fundamental Truths and Principles of our Profeſſion.

And,

And, indeed, THIS GREAT JUDGMENT OF GOD that hangs over our Heads, the Miſeries to which we are reduced, and which we have but too juſtly and *conſequentially* brought upon ourſelves, have given us a BITTER SENSE and Abhorrence of 'em. And, by the Help of GOD, we are *reſolv'd* to do what in us lies to wipe off thoſe Stains, and that great Guilt that preſſes heavily upon us, that has thrown ſuch a Blemiſh upon our own moſt Sacred Order, and given ſuch a deep Wound to the Church of *England*, that we cannot but in Juſtice acknowledge, when we ſigh, and groan, and make our Complaint before our merciful Father, that it is of *Ourſelves* that we periſh, if we are conſumed!

For, we muſt at laſt own, that 'tis to the weak Compliances of the Clergy of the Church of *England*, that we owe thoſe great Degrees of Reproach, and Shame, and Ruin, to which we ſeem to be given up; that we are, alas! become the Scorn, and a deteſtable Spectacle and Deriſion, even to the beſt of Men, and left unpitied to the Rage and Malice of thoſe that hate even our JUST Cauſe.

And, indeed, my Lord, what have we left to plead in our own Vindication! What ſhall we ſay to skreen us from the *Wrath of* GOD, and the Fury of the Deſtroying-Angel that

is ſent againſt us! We now, at laſt, ſee the Fruits of our Cowardice and Folly, and all thoſe vile Principles that led us on to join with a Rebellious Crew, who are acting over the Scenes of Forty One, and they have well-nigh accompliſh'd that fatal Round.

We are the *Proſtitutes*, for how ſhall we deny it! that have ſold ourſelves to work this great Wickedneſs; inſomuch that we are become a Proverb of Reproach to every Part of the World, where they profeſs Chriſt.

And that particularly, becauſe of our proſtituting the Sacred Name of GOD to our Abominations, and bringing the Guilt of the moſt horrid Perjuries upon our own Heads by Aſſerting and Declaring in the moſt Solemn Oaths, that we believe as great Contradictions in relation to him that's call'd the *Pretender*, as it would be to ſwear that He is a Woman.

This we muſt acknowledge to have been our Guilt, which has a Voice that ſhrieks aloud for Vengeance; for it has been but too juſtly laid to our Charge, that the Parliament itſelf, which is proverbially ſuppoſed to be able to do all Things, yet, even *the Parliament itſelf cannot make an Oath which the Clergy will not take.*

See the Anſwer to Dr. King, p. 123.

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They are now upon the Tryal of that Experiment; and preparing a New Oath for the Clergy, that ſhall, if it be poſſible, exceed the laſt; and in which there is this particular Article to be annex'd and ſworn to, *That if the Pretender ſhould ever get* POSSESSION *of the Throne, the Clergy, &c. are to ſwear, they will not, yet, be Obedient to him.*

The Deſign of which is viſible enough; the World is ſufficiently acquainted, how the moſt Noted amongſt us have been Shuffling, and Trimming, and Prevaricating with God and Man, to dawb over, and conceal the Glaring Iniquity of the *Oath of Abjuration*; and how they have been labouring to skreen their Vile Compliances under the Specious Pretence of the Innocence of a Sworn Submiſſion to an *Uſurper*, or a King *De Facto*.

Now, that the Clergy and their Church together may *periſh whole*; that they may have no Subterfuge, even of any Pretence whatever; no Plea, no Excuſe to be made for them; that they may be expos'd to the *Juſt Indignation* of God and good Men; and be left, without Compaſſion, to the Violences of thoſe that are confederated againſt 'em; their Darling Sham of a *De facto* Submiſſion ſhall be taken from them, and they themſelves ſhall be forced to *forſwear it*.

And is not this, My Lord, a juſt Judgment of God upon us! does it not plainly ſhew us

our great Folly, as well as our Guilt, in what we have been doing! and is not this, our ſevere Puniſhment, the Natural Conſequence of our Sins! and what can we ſay for ourſelves, that God may not quite remove our Candleſticks from us!

Behold, what we have gain'd by our Apoſtacies already! and what we are to expect ſtill from our Joining ourſelves in Affinity with the People of theſe Abominations!

Can any Compliances, that we can be capable of making, render the Determinations of theſe Confederate Blaſphemers leſs Deſtructive to ourſelves, or to the Church of *England!*

What can we expect, of Mercy, from them, that have bound themſelves by an Oath, with that late Unhappy L..d, whom *W.....n.* God has taken from the Earth, to find out a Teſt upon the hated Tribe, as they call us, that ſhall either STARVE them, or DAMN them!

My Lord, if it muſt be ſo, let us ſubmit to the Will of God! but let us rather chuſe to be STARV'D, then to be DAMN'D!

'Tis true, the Rage with which they are purſuing us, is very cruel; and the Malice of thoſe *Anabaptiſt* and *Fanatick* Juſtices, that are now in Employment, has appear'd in Flames already againſt ſome of our *Suffering Brethren*; and God only knows where it is to end!

But

But let us have the Comfort of Your Lordſhip's Bleſſing and Exhortations, IN OUR DISTRESS, not to be *afraid of their Terrors*, though their *Mercies* are CRUEL.

For our Eyes are fix'd upon Your Lordſhip, and the Time is come, the Time of Tryal, whether you yourſelf have the *Faith* and *Conſtancy* of a GOOD Biſhop.

Never was there, ſure, a Prelate of your Sacred Order, ſo rudely treated by the Publick Scoundrels of a Prevailing Faction, ſince the OLIVERIAN USURPATION. How have they made Your Lordſhip the Scoff and Deriſion of the Publick Stage, in their Lampoons and Comments upon Your late Letter to Your Clergy, particularly in that Libel, that would pretend to derive its Sanction and Authority from ST. JAMES's, where Your Lordſhip is repreſented, under the Title of the Biſhop of *Cujavia*, as one of the moſt contemptible and the moſt proſtituted Men upon the Earth; as one whom the late Miniſtry had taken for a TOOL and a CYPHER, to make uſe of as they pleas'd; to ſtand like a Stock, and fill up the Place of a Plenipo'; but to be capable of nothing beyond the Uſe of a Seal and a Stamp, to be taken on and off as Occaſion ſhould require.

See St. James's Poſt, Jun. 24. 1715.

Ibidem.

Ibidem.

And

And for this they load Your Lordſhip's Character, in the moſt Infamous Manner, as if to indemnify and ſecure yourſelf from the Malice of theſe Blood-Hounds, that are upon the Hunt to devour and ſpill the Beſt and Nobleſt Blood in the Nation, You would compound for Your own Life, with the Sacrifice of Your Clergy, and of the Honour and Fundamentals of the Pure Church of *England!*

My Lord, theſe are the Natural Conſequences and Reſult of our Compliances with the *Iniquity* of thoſe, who hate us and our Holy Cauſe, as the Devil hates Chriſt and the Goſpel, and are implacable, and never to be reconciled to us: The only Fruit therefore that is to be expected, when we deviate from the very Truth, is to be expos'd to the Scorn and Deriſion of thoſe, for whoſe Favour we have forſaken our GOD, and given ourſelves up to the Deluſions of the World.

What Army of the *Philiſtines* cou'd do us Hurt, were we but true to GOD, and to the incomparable Dictates of our Divine Religion! Would not GOD *then* be our ſtrong Hold! and guard and defend us from the Malice of the Accuſer of the Brethren and all thoſe his Inſtruments that are now let looſe to revel, and to triumph in our Deſtruction!

From

From whence then is it, that we have fallen ſo low! that the Diſtreſſed Church of *England* is in Tears and Sorrow, and clad in the ſad Liveries of Mourning; that Her Prieſts are forced to ſit down in Silence; that they are ſtruck Dumb, and lament in Secret!

From whence is all this, but from the juſt Indignation of GOD againſt us, whom we have forſaken, and therefore He has forſaken us! from whence is it, that our Honour and our Authority is departed from us! but becauſe we have departed from the Truth; becauſe we have join'd ourſelves with the Multitude in a Lye; and therefore our Reproach is juſt, when we hear thoſe that have a true Regard for GOD and for the Righteous Thing, caſt it in our Teeth, ſaying, "That "the Clergy have been the chief Inſtruments "in the Corruption and Ruin of the Church "of *England*, and the Fundamental Laws "and Conſtitution of their own Native Coun-"try; for the Clergy, rather than keep up to "their Old Doctrines which they taught us; "rather than they will ſuffer any Thing them-"ſelves, they will ſwear that they BELIEVE "that *Snow* is *black, and there cannot be an* "*Oath invented, that the Clergy will not take.*

And from hence it is, that we are thus deſpiſed in the World; for the People we ſhould find diſpoſed to receive our Inſtructions and

Exhor-

Exhortations to *Truth* and *Righteouſneſs*, could they but believe us *from our own Practice*, when we tell them, that they are none of CHRIST's Diſciples, but they forfeit the Favour and the Bleſſing of GOD, unleſs they forſake all they have in the World, yea, and give up their very Lives to GOD, rather than to walk in the Counſels of the Ungodly, or trim with the Multitude againſt the Truths of *Juſtice* and *Religion*.

My Lord, who can tell better than Your Lordſhip, from Your moſt profound Underſtanding in our Chriſtian Antiquities, that nothing ſo much promoted the Intereſt of Chriſtianity, in the very firſt Ages of it, as that Παῤῥησία, that brave Boldneſs of Speech, with which they (the Reverend Biſhops, and the reſt of the Orthodox) deliver'd the Naked Truths of the Goſpel: And when Perſecution came on, they ſeal'd 'em with their Blood.

But on the other hand, that it was the Lukewarmneſs, and Latitude, and the accurſed *Gnoſtick Principles* of the *Eaſtern* Churches, that provoked GOD to remove His Spirit, and His Goſpel from among them, to a Place more Worthy than they.

GOD grant, that their Example, and their *Judgments* may have Influence upon us! that we may *remember from whence we are fallen, and repent, and do our Firſt Works!* for GOD will alſo remove *our Candleſtick*, except *we repent*.

There

There is nothing but That can redeem this poor Diſtreſſed Church of *England* from Deſtruction: But That *will* do it, and upon thoſe Terms GOD will moſt certainly be reconciled again to us; and though our Sin has been as Scarlet, we ſhall once more be cloath'd with Righteouſneſs, as the Prieſts of the LORD.

And the beſt Method we can take to this Purpoſe, is, to declare to the Open World our Abhorrence and Deteſtation of our former Compliances and Apoſtacies, and eſpecially that abominable *Abjuration*, that has lain ſo long upon, and cry'd ſo loud againſt us.

And we will not be aſham'd to acknowledge, that we have done amiſs: For there is no Shame in it: But this will certainly attend it, the Glory and the Reputation of our being become ſincere in our Duties towards GOD and Man.

And this will not only reſtore us to the Favour of GOD, but alſo to the Good-Will of Mankind; Bleſſings more to be valu'd, than all the Riches and Preferments of the World.

Then Men will look with a different Aſpect upon us; and they will look with Compaſſion upon our Condition, when they ſee us *ſuffer for GOD's Sake.*

And if they *cannot* help us, yet they will reverence our Sacred Order, they will truſt us with their Souls again! and they will pray

to

to GOD for us; and we for them! ..... and who can tell what Bleſſings! who can tell what a Redemption GOD will work for us!

For GOD waits for our Return; that He may rejoice in our Converſion: And the Angels in Heaven will ſhout for Joy, when they come to hear it.

For theſe Reaſons, we have thought fit to addreſs Yonr Lordſhip in the firſt place; and as we preach to others Confeſſion and Acknowledgment of all Sin to be a neceſſary Article in the great Work of Repentance; ſo we alſo declare it to the World, that we renounce and deteſt all our former wicked Compliances, and eſpecially that of having ever been concern'd in the *Oath of Abjuration*, which we are convinc'd is contrary to all the Laws of Truth, of Righteouſneſs, and the Goſpel of JESUS CHRIST.

And ſhould it be poſſible for Your Lordſhip to trim and to comply in theſe Caſes, either out of Fear or Intereſt, we muſt renounce our Obedience to You, as a perfidious and falſe Biſhop, and a Betrayer of Your Truſt to GOD, and the Religious Care and Guidance of us.

But our Hope is, that you will ſet us a better Example, and follow that of thoſe faithful Confeſſors, and that *Noble Army of Martyrs*, that are now with GOD; and by

Your

our Patience and Reſignation to His Holy Will, and by Your faithful Diſpenſations towards us, You will animate our ſteady Reſolutions to do that *only* which is RIGHT; that we may have Comfort in Your Counſels; and, if it ſhall pleaſe GOD to purge us by any farther and ſeverer Tryals, we may, with an unſhaken Conſtancy, perſevere, even to the Loſing all we have in the World, whether it be our Spiritual or our Temporal Eſtates, our Friends and our Deareſt Relations, or our Lives, and with Patience and Comfort in GOD's Holy Spirit rejoice, that we may be counted Worthy to ſuffer for the Sake of the Goſpel and of JESUS CHRIST.

We are, My Lord, in every Chriſtian Duty,

Your Lordſhip's moſt Obedient

Servants, in CHRIST JESUS,

ΕΥΣΕΒΕΙΣ.

FINIS.